



For Immediate Release:

September 14, 2009

Air Quality Alert #16:

Air quality has returned to acceptable levels except in the immediate vicinity of the Station Fire

LOS ANGELES – According to the South Coast Air Quality Management District, the air quality in Los Angeles County has returned to “moderate” to “good” levels, except for in the areas immediately around the still-burning portions of the Station Fire in the San Gabriel Mountains.

“In any area of visible smoke or where there is an odor of smoke, all individuals are urged to be cautious and to avoid unnecessary outdoor activities,” said Jonathan E. Fielding, MD, MPH; Director of Public Health and Health Officer.

If you are still directly impacted by smoke from the fire, the following recommendations will help you protect yourself and your family from harmful effects of bad air quality:

- If outdoor air is bad, try to keep indoor air as clean as possible by keeping windows closed.
- Avoid using air conditioning units that only draw in air from the outside or that do not have a re-circulating option. Residents should check the filters on their air conditioners and replace them regularly. Indoor air filtration devices with HEPA filters can further reduce the level of particles that circulate indoors.
- If it is too hot during the day to keep the doors or windows closed and you do not have an air conditioning unit that re-circulates indoor air, consider going to an air conditioned public place, such as a library or shopping center, to stay cool and protect yourself from harmful air.
- Do not use fireplaces (either wood burning or gas), candles, and vacuums. Use damp cloths to clean dusty indoor surfaces. Do not smoke.
- If you have symptoms of lung or heart disease that may be related to smoke exposure, including severe coughing, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, wheezing, chest tightness or pain, palpitations, nausea or unusual fatigue or lightheadedness, contact your doctor immediately or go to an urgent care center.
- When smoke is heavy for a prolonged period of time, fine particles can build up indoors even though you may not be able to see them. Wearing a mask may prevent exposures to large particles. However, most masks do not prevent exposure to fine particles and toxic gases, which may be more dangerous to your health.

In addition, tips for conducting a safe clean-up in the aftermath of the fire are posted on the Public Health website at <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov>.

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Public Health News

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